

Rosanna Steiner Interview on the Gay Nineties and Barbershop Ballad Contest

Recorded June 12, 2025 at the Friends of Historic Forest Grove Old Train Station Museum in Forest Grove, Oregon

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Note on the text: This transcript was made through AI in 2025 with some manual corrections. We recommend checking this text against the audio recording before quoting the speakers, as it may contain errors.

Elle Griego 0:15

Hello, I'm Elle Griego behind the camera, and I am here with the wonderful Rosanna Steiner. We are at the Friends of Historic Forest Grove Old Train Station Museum here in Forest Grove, Oregon, on June 12, 2025. I will be asking Rosanna about her memories and experiences surrounding the Gay Nineties festival and the Barbershop Ballad Contest. Thank you for being here, Rosanna. Could you please start by telling me a bit about yourself and your childhood. Where were you born, and when did you first move to Forest Grove?

Rosanna Steiner 0:46

I was born in California, and we moved up here when I was three, to Hillsboro, and then we lived in Hillsboro through grade school. I went to sixth grade in the beginning of seventh grade at Banks, and then I came to Forest Grove and started school at Neil Armstrong Junior High.

Elle Griego 1:04

I see, and do you remember when you first started attending the Gay Nineties festival as a kid?

Rosanna Steiner 1:14

It would have been as soon as I got here, in seventh grade, it was the second half of seventh grade, and I remember thinking, "What is going on? What are we doing? Everybody's dressed up in these bathing suits and old-timey bathing suits and long dresses." And so that was my first introduction to the Gay Nineties celebration.

Elle Griego 1:33

That's good to know. I'm curious, when you did live in Hillsboro, was there any sense of... it sounds like you had no idea that the Gay Nineties was going on in Forest Grove as a kid?

Rosanna Steiner 1:37

Nope. Not a bit.

Elle Griego 1:44

All right, that's good to know. And I'm curious, when you think back to the Gay Nineties Festival and the Barbershop Contest, what do you remember most clearly or fondly and in what ways did you and your family participate in the festival?

Rosanna Steiner 2:05

Oh boy. Well, I remember there was a lot going on at school. A lot of people would dress up in the old-timey bathing suits and long dresses, and men would wear old-time suits and have exaggerated mustaches, and so I think I remember mostly it being at school. I don't know... my mom worked quite a bit, so I don't know that she really participated. Sometimes during the celebrations in town, we would both go up for that and see the parade. And yeah, so that was fun.

Elle Griego 2:35

I see.. and you were here in seventh grade. Did you graduate high school here?

Rosanna Steiner 2:35

Yes, 1980.

Elle Griego 2:35

Was it something you went to... was it in middle school and high school? Or was it a bigger deal in middle school versus high school?

Rosanna Steiner 2:35

Yeah, no, I'd say it was probably about the same, because it went on, you know, throughout all those years. And so it was fun to participate in that for those for junior high and high school, how did the high school celebrate? I've seen photos of the Ballard Town Belle contest. Was that something you can recall?

Yeah, the Ballard Town Belle Contest, if I remember correctly, was, again, the ladies would like to dress up in their old-timey swimsuits or whatever Gay Nineties outfits. But mostly I remember in teenage years, it was the bathing suits that people wanted to wear. Those were the cool things to wear. You know, we didn't want to wear long dresses and stuff like the adults. But one thing that sticks out in my mind, that I think is really funny is a lot of people had these swimsuits made for them. So they were made out of cotton instead of wool, because back in the day, they were probably a wool type fabric, and they were black. These were in all different calico colors and stripes and all kinds of things. But the thing that stands out in my mind mostly was they were wearing their white tube socks and their Nike sneakers with bathing suits, so that, I thought, was kind of funny. That really stuck out in my mind.

Elle Griego 4:06

And what year did you graduate from high school?

Rosanna Steiner 4:06

1980.

Elle Griego 4:06

Have you lived in Forest Grove since then?

Rosanna Steiner 4:11

Well let's see... no, I moved to Beaverton right after high school, and then I lived in Beaverton, and then met my husband, and we moved to Portland, and then when our kids were little, my husband wanted to move out of the city, and he said, "Do you want to move back to Forest Grove?" And I said, "Sure." I really liked Forest Grove. So we came back, I think 1994 and then we've been here ever since. So our kids went to school here.

Elle Griego 4:52

I see. During the years after you left, did you ever come back to Forest Grove to see the festival, or was it you... were there in high school, Forest Grove was transported back to the Gay Nineties once a year, and was this big phenomenon. And then you came back, and it was kind of gone? Because, as you may know, the Gay Nineties festival as it is, went away around the early 1990s.

Rosanna Steiner 5:07

Yeah, it was gone by the time we came back, they weren't celebrating it anymore. And I was kind of sad about that, because I thought that would be a neat tradition for our kids, too. So kind of sad.

Elle Griego 5:18

When you or... let me ask, do you recall how the Gay Nineties festival was organized? Do you by chance know who was involved in planning or leading it? Do you recall what local businesses or city officials or particular community members did?

Rosanna Steiner 5:37

To my knowledge, it was the entire town. Everybody had something that they were doing. They were in charge of this, that, or the other thing. I couldn't tell you exactly what, but I would say every local business in town participated. So many, what I like to call leading citizens, that were really involved in Forest Grove. They were all involved, and they always dressed up, and everybody just helped and volunteered. And yeah, it seemed like the parades were sponsored by local businesses. The floats, I mean, were sponsored by local businesses. So it was pretty neat.

Elle Griego 6:18

Can you remember any names of the old businesses that used to be here? I know Forest Grove's really changed over the years.

Rosanna Steiner 6:18

Oh, man, yeah. It's so different now. I would say, gosh, just about anything you could think. Service stations -- I couldn't think of the names of them right now -- they were involved, Montgomery Ward's, I want to say JC Penney's... trying to think what else was around around that time, probably restaurants that were in the area, I would guess Poppio's. I think we had a sunshine pizza for a while, but yeah, so basically, I think just whatever was in business around that time, they were all involved in some manner, and it was good advertising for them too, because they'd have their advertising on their floats. And yeah, so it was pretty fun.

Elle Griego 7:09

And do you recall going to the barbershop contest?

Rosanna Steiner 7:11

Oh, yeah, that was really fun. I enjoyed... I've always liked singing and listening to singing, and so that always appealed to me. And, yeah, there were many, many, many, I think back in those days, there'd be like, probably 20 different barbershop quartets participating, and, you know, wearing their full garb, and, yeah, it was really cool.

Elle Griego 7:33

Do you remember, were they mostly from Oregon? Did they come from all over the United States? Were they from just local towns?

Rosanna Steiner 7:40

I think people came from everywhere. I think it was an invitation that was to whoever wanted to come and participate. I couldn't tell you how far away they came, but I would imagine they'd be welcomed if they came from far away, but I'm sure there were a lot of local barbershop quartets and yeah, so it was fun to watch.

Elle Griego 8:01

Yeah, and I understand in the 1950s at least, that the barbershop contest was broadcast on national television and radio. When it came to your time here participating in the festival and the contest, was that still going on? Was it still broadcast?

Rosanna Steiner 8:18

Boy, I couldn't tell you that. Yeah, somebody else might know that, but I don't recall seeing anything filmed, but it could have been that I was off doing something else. Teenager off, you know, yeah, because they're a lot of activities, a lot of things to do. And, yeah, it was really fun. It was just, and I felt like it was, it was like the whole city participated, and it was like a big event of the year back in those days, so.

Elle Griego 8:44

When you think about the Gay Nineties festival, what emotions or feelings do those memories provoke? Is it perhaps nostalgia or joy, a sense of community, something else entirely?

Rosanna Steiner 8:57

Boy, yeah, as I've said a couple times, it was a lot of fun. And I do think it was a big sense of community, literally, because it was the entire community. I did like the nostalgic aspect of it, because you get to learn about an earlier time, and it was a time that I never really thought that I'd be interested in. So it was kind of neat to... and you could ask anybody questions. There were people there that were from the Gay Nineties, that were, at the time, quite elderly, but they still, you know, participated, and they talked to people. And so it was really interesting to...

Elle Griego 9:33

I'm curious. So of course, with the Gay Nineties, first of all, it's all surrounded around the idea of the 1890s. I'm curious, what did the 1890s mean to you or to Forest Grove? What did it represent?

Rosanna Steiner 9:48

You know, again, I was a teenager, so I probably wasn't thinking a whole lot about it, because, you know, teenagers don't want to be thinking about the past and that kind of thing. But it did give me some more awareness and more appreciation for the time, because obviously you could see what people were wearing and the barbershop quartets, which were popular then, and it was actually quite educational. So that was kind of nice and I think it was a good learning experience for people to learn about the 1890s so... yeah.

Elle Griego 10:15

Do you have any sense, or perhaps guesses, of why it was the 1890s out of all decades?

Rosanna Steiner 10:28

I just felt like it was maybe a simpler time, and people thought, you know, this is when my grandmother lived, or my great grandmother, or whatever the case may be. And it just kind of gives you a sense of, I don't know family, I think maybe and, like you said, nostalgia, you kind of think, oh, wow, you know. But

yeah, for me, I think it's just simpler times, just, you know, homemade food, and getting together as a big family, and, you know, it's just kind of was just a nicer, easier time, I think.

Elle Griego 11:00

So what was, I guess, what would characterize... perhaps difficult is too harsh of a word, but hard times in contrast to simpler times, what was the hard times when the Gay Nineties festival was actually going on? Why do you think there was, I suppose, why do you think there was this desire to go back to a simpler time. Do you have any guesses? It's a big question.

Rosanna Steiner 11:25

Yeah. No, that's... yeah, that's an interesting question, because... I feel like, maybe because I had a single mom at the time, and so I felt like she was always working, and it was a little bit, I feel like it was a little harder to make ends meet. I think maybe more in the 1890s I think people had more of a sense of camaraderie. Neighbors were helping each other more. It was just a different, I think, feel and so... yeah, I just feel like, not like times were harder, you know, in the 70s, but just a different, I guess, a different way to look at it. It's yeah... so if that makes sense.

Elle Griego 12:08

Absolutely, would you say... well, I guess I should ask what role did music play in your memories of the Gay Nineties, beyond the barbershop contest, as we've already talked about. Was there particular songs, dances, or performances that stood out to you?

Rosanna Steiner 12:31

I know that they had us in school, in junior high, and I'm not sure about high school, but probably... they had us learn some of the songs. And I remember "In the Good Old Summertime." I remember that, I think the whole town was singing that. They did have sing-alongs too, that I remember, like when the parade was going by there a lot of the floats people would be singing, and you kind of pick up some of the songs that they were singing. And I do remember that particular song. And yeah, I do remember at school, they taught us some other songs too, but I couldn't tell you what they were, but yeah, so it was kind of neat to to learn them and sing them, and then to listen to other people singing, and of course, the barbershop quartets too.

Elle Griego 13:16

Would you say... was there ever any concern with historical accuracy when it came to the Gay Nineties? What I mean by that is, was there any conversations or debate about, oh, was the 1890s really about, you know, barbershop music? Was it really about cancan dances? Was it about old fashioned sundaes? Or was it really just about fun? Did people reconcile the fun with any of these historical things of what the real 1890s was like?

Rosanna Steiner 13:58

Not that I'm aware of. There probably were some people that said, hey, some of this is a little bit you're kind of, you know, playing fast and loose with the dates. You know, it could have been more 1850s or 60s for some of the things. I don't know personally, but I feel like I would probably be okay if they borrowed from other times and just said it was the 1890s because the things that we did were so much fun and just the idea of the camaraderie and, you know, just all the different activities and stuff seemed like they were from the 1890s, but I didn't ever hear anybody complain, like, "Oh, that's from the this time or that time." I'm sure there were probably people that were concerned about that. But I didn't hear anything.

Elle Griego 14:49

Have you seen pictures, there used to be like a group of cavemen that would come to the Gay Nineties festival. It might have been before your time. It was early 60s or so, maybe late 50s. I know Mark Hatfield

was... there's a picture of Mark Hatfield with some cavemen. Of course, in the 1890s there was no cavemen.

Rosanna Steiner 15:10

No, no cavemen, not that I'm aware of. Yeah, that's funny. I know there were different groups that would come and perform besides the barbershop quartets. And I'm wondering, yeah, the cavemen might have been something like that, like, you know, hey, let's have a novelty type act, and these cavemen fit the bill. So maybe that's what that was about. But, and I wouldn't be surprised, and also, was he running for office at that time? Attention getter.

Elle Griego 15:44

Yeah, were there any challenges associated with the festival over its lifespan -- when you were there --that you can recall?

Rosanna Steiner 15:51

I feel like every once in a while there'd be something with coordinating. There seemed to be some snafu, like over trying to get out this group of kids here in this one spot, or there might have been a lag in the parade or something like that. But, yeah, nothing, nothing major that I remember. So everything seemed to look like it was going pretty smoothly.

Elle Griego 16:24

I would say... we've talked a lot about the community beyond its community role. What personal significance did the Gay Nineties festival hold for you? How did it shape your experience of growing up living in Forest Grove?

Rosanna Steiner 16:42

It meant a lot to me because again, I learned a lot about the 1890s. I admired the fact that just about the whole town turned out for it. There were so many school activities, I think I made a lot of friends. I met a lot of people that you know were also interested in the Gay Nineties celebrations, and it was fun to participate. And yeah, it just seemed like... it seemed like everybody enjoyed it, and everybody was interested in it, and it was just a fun time. And I remember we were all sad when it was over.

Elle Griego 17:17

Was it something that children, young people, or, I guess, anyone would look forward to almost like the way people look forward to holidays like Christmas and Halloween? Was it something where someone in January would be like, "Oh man, I can't wait for the Gay Nineties to come around." Or was it something that just kind of popped up and a month before people started to get excited. Was it this phenomenon throughout the year, or was it really just limited to the month before or after the festival?

Rosanna Steiner 17:51

I feel like there was a lot of planning ahead of time. I feel like, you know, I couldn't tell you how far ahead of time, but I do feel like people start talking about it at least a couple months ahead of time. And I would imagine there's probably a lot of, you know, preparing that needed to be done, and volunteers and coordinating things and stuff. So yeah, I would imagine that they, you know... but yeah, I do, I do remember people talking about it for quite a while before it happened. So I think people were getting excited about it, and what am I gonna wear, and what are we gonna do this year? And, you know, I think there were certain things that people look forward to. There was like a pancake breakfast. And of course, the parade. And a friend of mine told me recently that there was a gemstone show, which I thought was really interesting. I had forgotten about that, but yeah, a lot of activities that seemed like the whole town turned out. So, yeah.

Elle Griego 18:43

From what you can remember, do you think this kind of nostalgic celebration of the turn of the century America was part of a larger national trend at all? Did you see it anywhere else in popular culture growing up?

Rosanna Steiner 18:59

No, I, in fact, I was so surprised by it in the first place, and I had to really, kind of, you know, do some learning about it, because I never heard of a Gay Nineties celebration, and I didn't totally understand really why. But I guess because we were Ballad Town, USA. It was the barbershop quartets I think that got the whole thing started, and then somebody decided to expand on it, but to my knowledge, I think we were the only ones that did it. But if there were others, I don't know.,

Elle Griego 19:28

Yeah, that makes sense. It's interesting. Do you feel like today there's a decade, you know, in the 2020s is there a decade that we look back at, you know, today kind of nostalgically? I would almost say, a lot of people look back at the 50s, or the 70s, 60s as being these nostalgic eras. I'm wondering, was there that when you were growing up? Was there a decade like that? Was it the 1890s solely? Were there other decades when people kind of nostalgically looked back on or was that the only way you can recall, whether it was because of the influence of the Gay Nineties here in town, or popular culture outside of that?

Rosanna Steiner 20:14

Yeah, I think that just about every decade has something that's nostalgia for people, and I think it depends, like, on your age. For me, you know, I was a teenager in the '70s, and so the '70s have a soft spot in my heart. And I think there's a lot of people that think that too. They have different eras that they look back on, simply because they were either a teen then or something, you know, really good happened to them, whether they were a child or a teen or an adult. But yeah, I can think of good things for just about all the decades that I can remember. So I was born in the early '60s, so I don't remember much of the '60s, but yeah, the '70s. I'm very nostalgic about the '70s. That was a fun time, and that's when I met a lot of my friends, and you, you know, you kind of form friendships, and yeah, so that's what I would say. But yeah, there's probably a lot of people though that... there were a lot of older people there that, you know, really enjoyed talking about the 1890s which I thought was really neat.

Elle Griego 21:14

Yeah, makes me feel like a Gay Seventies, or maybe a Super Seventies...

Rosanna Steiner 21:21

Yeah. Well, and some people are interested in different decades simply because of what was going on then the fashions or the movies or different things. I think people can be nostalgic about, you know, things that they admire, maybe.

Elle Griego 21:34

Was there any sense... it sounds like the 1890s were put really in a good light by the festival. Not that's a bad thing, but was there ever any, perhaps, concentration on the negative aspects of living in the 1890s? Sometimes I have seen photos of like pioneer wagons and whatnot, and we talked about the cavemen, which, of course, are not the right decade. [Both laugh.] But, was there any other teaching of like, "Oh be grateful, because we're in the 20th century now, you know, thank God, it's not the 19th century." Was there any... was that sentiment popular at all, or shown or taught to children? Do you recall?

Rosanna Steiner 22:22

I think probably me being, you know, a teenager around that time, and talking to other teenagers. I think we probably passed remarks like, "Oh, I'm so glad that, you know, I didn't have to wash my clothes by hand," and didn't have to, you know, so I'm sure we talked about that, because, yeah, we do have it a lot easier when it comes to, you know, appliances and conveniences, that kind of thing. So, yeah, it's a double edged sword. You know, it's like, yeah, it was a simpler time, but, you know, you had to do a lot more work, and there wasn't the automatic things that we have now. And so I know that we talked about that, but as far as the adults talking about it, I don't remember that, but I do remember discussing with other teens, you know, I'm glad we don't have to do that. I'm glad we don't have to wear that.

Elle Griego 23:08

You know, it's interesting, I'm sure you know that the barbershop contest still exists, in a way, but on a much smaller scale, with the Gay Nineties festival, as I mentioned, has been long gone since the 1990s. We know that the woman in charge of organizing the festival moved out of town, and no one else stepped up to take the reins. Do you feel that with the end of the Gay Nineties festival and the loss of the grand scale of the barbershop contests has left a sense of loss in the community? Do you feel like Forest Grove now feels like a totally different town for not having it?

Rosanna Steiner 24:01

Oh, that's a good question. Well, I know when we moved back in the '90s, I was very disappointed that it was not still going, and I was glad to hear that there were still barbershop quartet contests, which I thought was great. But yeah, several times I had wished that they could, you know, maybe somehow revive it. I know it would be really difficult. You'd need lots of money. You'd need lots of sponsors, volunteers. It would be a neat thing to do. I know Portland City Club right now has been doing a lot of things they're doing... I want to say an Oktoberfest, and I know that I went to that the last two years, and I really enjoyed it, and maybe it'll just be new traditions like that if we can't revive the Gay Nineties. Which is sad, and I know there's other people too that would love to revive that, but it might be something that is not... maybe there's not enough people that would want to see that these days, I don't know.

Elle Griego 25:00

Yeah, there's definitely a question, I think, among younger people, like, "Oh, should it exist today?" I wonder, do you think it could exist as the 1890s, do you wonder, if you know people today would be like oh, let's kind of talk about a different decade.

Rosanna Steiner 25:21

It's interesting to think about that, to think if they would be interested in that. Some people really are interested in history, and some people aren't. So I think that's the hard part, is because it's very obviously very historic, 1890s so long time ago, but I don't know. I mean, I think if somebody gave a talk on it, and enough people, you know, went to it and listened and stuff, I think it could span the ages. I think young people would be interested all the way up through older people, because that's kind of how it was then. I was surprised, because, like I said, at first I was kind of like, "What is going on?" [Rosanna laughs.] And then once it was explained to me, and I got into it and everything, it was so much fun and so much camaraderie, and sometimes it almost doesn't matter what you're doing, as long as you're enjoying yourself and there's other people with you, and they're enjoying it. And so that's kind of how I got interested in the Gay Nineties celebrations, and I do miss it, and it's fun to think about it, so it'd be nice if we could bring it back someday.

Elle Griego 26:19

Yeah. Why do you think it doesn't exist anymore?

Rosanna Steiner 26:22

I don't know. That's a good question. I kind of think maybe it's partly because... I know you said that the

lady that coordinated it moved away. And that's interesting to hear, because, you know, maybe she was the one that got, you know, she was banging the drum, getting everybody rounded up and saying, "Hey, it's that time of year, and let's do it, and remember how much fun we had." And you kind of need a cheerleader. You need somebody that can host it, that wants to host. But there again, like I mentioned, you still need, you know, sponsors. You need the money to, you know, it's volunteers, and so, yeah, but like I said, I keep liking it to the Oktoberfest that we have now, and that's a lot of fun, and a lot of people get involved with that. And so there might be new traditions instead of the Gay Nineties.

Elle Griego 27:08

It's so interesting, because as you described, it seems like the whole town was involved, and then by that point, it was just about one woman.

Rosanna Steiner 27:19

Yeah, so I'm not really sure what you know... and there again, if she left, maybe other people left too. People that were sponsoring it, the businesses change. Some businesses maybe didn't want to do it anymore. So it kind of just kind of, you know, dwindled away, which is sad, but hopefully someone will know that. I know you're interviewing other people, so hopefully somebody can let you know more concretely, what, you know why it kind of fizzled out. So I'm glad they kept the barbershop quartets. But, yeah.

Elle Griego 27:49

Yeah. Outside of the context of the Gay Nineties and the Barbershop Contest, how do you feel like Forest Grove has changed from when you were growing up as a teenager, versus today?

Rosanna Steiner 28:12

In a lot of ways, it's still the same, which is kind of neat. It looks the same in a lot of ways. There are some new buildings, but I do appreciate the fact that they are trying to use the older buildings, just, you know, refurbish them on the inside. I think just times have changed in general. So of course, Forest Grove is going to change. I do like that it's still a small town. I don't feel like it's really gotten that much bigger. And again, there are some new businesses. There are some houses that had to be taken down for various reasons, and that's kind of sad, because I did enjoy all the old houses in town. There's still a lot of really nice old houses, but as far as it's changed, I don't know. I feel like it still has the same small town feel, but it does seem a little bit different, a little more modern, and that's okay, because, you know, things move on.

Elle Griego 29:04

I'm curious, do you remember which houses or what area the old houses that were...?

Rosanna Steiner 29:12

Oh, I'm so not directional. Okay. There's a little parking lot that's on A Street, and I'm trying to think, let's see... there's two parking lots. One's for Pacific, and one is a public parking and I think they're both on 21st, and there used to be really big houses there, big, nice, I'm going to guess, Edwardian or Victorian houses. And they both got converted into apartments, but then they ended up having to take them down. I'm sure maybe they were too old, or they needed the room for parking or something like that. Those two always spring to mind, and there's just been a few other ones that have had to go for various reasons. And sometimes I think developers just buy them and they want to put up their apartment buildings, so. And there's a lot more apartments in town and a lot more houses in town, and it seems like they're constantly building more. So that's one big change. Yeah, yeah.

Elle Griego 30:10

And I'm curious, why do you think it's important for people today or for future generations to know about the Gay Nineties Festival and the Barbershop Ballad contest? Well, I'm assuming you think it's important,

because you've agreed to let me interview you today. What is, I suppose, the enduring value or lesson from this part of Forest Grove's history? What can we learn? What can we learn from it?

Rosanna Steiner 30:37

Oh, a lot, really. Again, like I've said probably about three times, I had no idea about anything from the 1890s, and coming here and being a part of the festivities, I think I learned a lot. I think a lot of kids learned a lot. And I'm sure adults, probably, you know, were able to learn a lot too. I like history, so I like hearing about things that happened, you know, in the past. I'm hoping other people do too. I think that was a big draw for this, besides all the activities, the camaraderie and the fun, it was just fun. Just the things they did were fun. During the parade, they had people that were police that would come and arrest you and put you in jail, and you had to pay money to get out of jail, and then the money went, you know, to a charitable cause, which I thought was neat. There were just a lot of aspects of the celebration. I think that just about everything, it meant something to somebody, if not everything, at least there was one thing from the celebration that somebody could appreciate and have a takeaway.

Elle Griego 31:51

Sounds like it's a balance of history and fun.

Rosanna Steiner 31:55

Yeah. It's like they took a historic time and then made it fun. So not only did you learn something, but you had fun. [She laughs.]

Elle Griego 32:06

And of course, today, you are a volunteer with Friends of Historic Forest Grove, which thank you so much. When did you join Friends of Historic Forest Grove and start volunteering?

Rosanna Steiner 32:18

Probably last September, I think. I liked to go to the open houses in town, and I talked to some people from Friends of Historic Forest Grove, and I thought this is kind of for me. And I had recently retired, and so I wanted to do some volunteer work, and this really appealed to me, because I do like history, I do like Forest Grove. So yeah, talked to the right people and filled out some forms, and here I am, and I'm, you know, I've been having a really good time. There's a lot of fun, a lot of fun events with Friends of Historic Forest Grove, too, so.

Elle Griego 32:59

Yeah, it sounds like you're getting that sense of history and fun with Friends now that you used to get with the Gay Nineties?

Rosanna Steiner 33:04

Yeah, yeah, maybe I've exchanged one for another. [She laughs.]

Elle Griego 33:11

Let me see, I think just one more question or so, is there anything about the Gay Nineties festival, or your experience that you feel is forgotten today or misunderstood?

Rosanna Steiner 33:23

Oh, it's a good question. Let's see. I can't think of anything. I feel like everything that was done was pretty straightforward. I don't think there was anything that was misunderstood, although there were probably

people that wondered why they were cavemen at the event, but... people probably had some questions. But yeah, I don't feel like... I think everything was, you know, pretty basic and spelled out, and they tried to celebrate the 1890s, give you a little bit of history on it, but in a fun way. One of the things that I thought was funny was they would do a mustache contest, and men would grow their mustaches out for this event, and they would have, you know, the Snidely Whiplash mustache. So I thought that was kind of neat. I think it was fun for women to pull out their old garments and wear them. Also, I think it was neat at school, if people didn't have any costumes to wear for Gay Nineties, that the school had things that people could borrow. So I thought that was kind of a neat aspect. Everybody kind of got involved. But yeah, as far as anything being misunderstood or, I just don't remember anything negative, but there again, maybe I was only looking for the good, I don't know, but yeah.

Elle Griego 34:48

Well, I think that's all the questions I had for you today. Thank you so much Rosanna for being here. Do you have any more concluding thoughts?

Rosanna Steiner 34:55

I can't think of anything. Yeah, I think we talked about just about everything that I can remember. So I'm hoping other people have other pieces of the puzzle for you. So, yeah.

Elle Griego 35:11

No, you provided so much. Thank you so much.